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DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/S:STHIBEAULT AND
JMCCARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBOURGEOIS, DBENZE AND
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA RWINCHESTER
WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC
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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [KPAQ](#) [OPRC](#) [SY](#)

SUBJECT: Damascus Media Reaction: Syria/Lebanon, Syria/Qatar,
Syria/Iraq, Israeli operation in Lebanon (8/7)

¶1. **Summary:** Syrian papers reported that President Asad has sent a message of support and solidarity to Lebanese President Lahoud, conveyed by Foreign Minister Waleed al-Mouallem, to confirm Syria's solidarity with and support of the steadfastness of the Lebanese people and the national resistance. FM Mouallem will attend the Arab Foreign Ministers' meeting scheduled in Beirut on August 7. Papers also featured FM Mouallem's statement following his meetings on August 6 with Lebanese President Lahoud, PM al-Saniora and Parliament Speaker Berri. Mouallem pointed out that the US-French draft Security Council resolution aims to save Israeli from its military defeat by extracting political gains from the Lebanese people and resistance. He described the draft resolution as "bad and unjust for Lebanon." Mouallem also said that "the Arab Foreign Ministers meeting must voice support for the Lebanese national resistance in the face of the brutal Israeli aggression." He said that the Lebanese resistance has broken the claim of Israeli military superiority, stressing that "a people armed with the will of resistance will inevitably emerge victorious." Answering a question on the possibility that Israel could expand the scope of its aggression, Minister Mouallem said that "Syria will react directly and firmly to any Israeli aggression on its land."

Papers also reported that President Asad has received a phone call from UN Secretary General Kofi Annan that focused on the results of contacts and discussions to end the Israeli aggression. President Asad confirmed that Syria supports everything on which the Lebanese agree. He also stressed that "any resolution adopted without unanimous Lebanese agreement will complicate things and increase unrest." He pointed out that "some forces are seeking to achieve political gains for Israel, which failed to achieve them through war. This endeavor will not succeed," he said.

Papers also featured President Asad's meeting with Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani, Qatari First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, which focused on developments in Lebanon, the upcoming Arab Foreign Ministers' meeting in Beirut and bilateral relations.

President Asad also received Amer Mousa, Secretary General of the Arab League. Talks focused on the continuing Israeli assault against Lebanon and means of supporting Lebanese resolve. The meeting dealt with the upcoming Arab foreign ministers' meeting in Beirut and ongoing international and Arab efforts to bring about a cease-fire.

On Syrian-Iraqi relations, papers reported that Dr. Mahmoud al-Abrash, Speaker of the Syrian Parliament, and his Iraqi counterpart, Dr. Mahmoud al-Mashhadani, signed an agreement for parliamentary cooperation. Speaker Mashhadani expressed hope that fraternal relations would be enhanced on all levels between the people of Syria and Iraq, for their mutual benefit. For his part, Dr. al-Abrash stated that "the visit of the Iraqi delegation was successful by all measures and represents a qualitative turning point and the beginning of a historical change in relations between Syria and Iraq. He stressed the need to improve relations at all levels to meet the aspirations of both countries.

End of summary.

¶2. Selected Headlines:

"A message of support and solidarity from President Assd to Lebanese President Lahoud. Foreign Minister al-Mouallem: National resistance breaks the illusion of Israeli military supremacy... The American-French draft UNSC resolution aims to save Israel from its military defeat and achieve political gains... Syria calls for unified Arab position in supporting Lebanon and its brave resistance... Syria will definitely and directly respond to any Israeli aggression against its lands" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/7)

"President Asad confirms to UN SecGen Annan that Syria supports the Lebanese consensus. President Asad discusses developments in Lebanon and the Arab Foreign Ministers meeting in Beirut with Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Bin Jaber Al Thani and Arab League Secretary General" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/7)

"Arab Foreign Ministers confer in Beirut today to support Lebanon's position. Speaker of Lebanese Parliament Berri announces Lebanon's rejection of the vicious American-French UNSC draft resolution" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/7)

"The Lebanese national resistance shells an Israeli military post and Haifa, injuring and killing scores of Israelis" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/7)

"Former Lebanese MP Wakim: The American-French project is a pure Israeli decision" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/7)

"Speaker of the Syrian Parliament al-Abrash and his Iraqi counterpart al-Mashhadani sign a parliamentary cooperation agreement" (Government-owned Tishreen, 8/7)

¶3. Editorial Block Quotes:

"Democracy of Massacres"

Abd-al-Fattah al-Awad, Chief Editor of government-owned Al-Thawra, said (8/7): "The United States, which keeps delaying a cease-fire in Lebanon, cannot claim to be a champion of democracy and human rights....

"The international community has shown complete impotence. This was first evident at the Rome conference. It was then evident in the fact that the successive Israeli massacres passed without even a condemnation. And it is blatantly evident in the failure to stop the Israeli aggression. All this is a result of insolent American orders. The United States is not trying to hide its objectives, even if they conflict with the most fundamental rules of the international community....

"Some Arab countries helped and promoted US concepts and played the role they were asked to play.... Those countries were not embarrassed before their peoples when they heard Olmert rely on their positions to justify the continuation of the aggression and expose secret contacts and talks that the Israelis no longer keep under the table. There is mounting support for the resistance in all Arab countries.... This will foil all US plans for the region.... All Arab regimes must stop moving in the wrong direction and must use language that brings them closer to their peoples...."

"Has Chavez' Message Reached Arab Regimes?"

Ali Nasrallah, an editorialist in government-owned Al-Thawra, wrote (8/7): "Venezuelan President Chavez has decided to recall his country's ambassador in Tel Aviv to protest the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and Palestine. This makes us wonder about the reasons that make some official Arab regimes show such impotence toward the open aggression against Lebanon and Palestine and toward the American occupation and its designs in Iraq...."

"We hope that Chavez' message will reach the Arab regimes that criticized the national Lebanese resistance and have felt content with sending a bit of aid to Lebanon...."

"The terrorist Israeli-American massacres in Lebanon, Palestine, and Iraq are [part of] a real war between a people seeking freedom and resisting, with the bodies of its children and youth and whatever tools are available for them, the powers of occupation and terrorism, and terrorist colonial forces against whom all cards of power and available weapons must be used."

"Only Arab Solidarity Can Curb Aggression"

Muhammad al-Khadir, a commentator in government-owned Al-Ba'th, wrote (8/7): "Only Arab solidarity can curb the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. We deplore world silence on the massacre that Israel perpetrated in the Lebanese village of Al-Qaa, that killed approximately 33 Lebanese and Syrian workers in an air strike...."

"If they are willing, Arabs can do much, given the pressure cards they have, especially in the face of Washington. If the past few weeks showed that Arabs were divided and fragmented, the next few days require that they return to at least a minimum level of solidarity. They must be aware of the danger of the American effort to promote deployment of forces that will disarm the resistance. Through this, Washington once again seeks to help Israel achieve what it has failed to achieve on the battlefield...."

"Syrian People's Message to Low and Rancorous Lebanese Parties"

Khalaf al-Jarrad, Chief Editor of government-owned Tishreen, wrote (8/7): "While Syria mobilizes all its capabilities on all levels to extend all support to the Lebanese government and Lebanese people, we are surprised by some malicious Lebanese leaders who are accusing Syria of playing a negative role in Lebanon and trying to return to Lebanon through the blood of the Lebanese...."

"We remind these spiteful parties of Syria's efforts to support Lebanon and the Lebanese.... They are betraying the Lebanese"

people and implementing foreign orders to eliminate the Lebanese resistance.... We confirm to these rancorous Lebanese and to their masters that Syria will not stop its full support for the Arab resistance everywhere or abandon its principled and pan-Arab positions. Syria will remain the steadfast Arab fortress in the face of the colonial schemes and the defender of Arab identity, dignity, and rights. We will never abandon this position, and we will not be frightened by threats from any party and under any name or excuse...."

"Towards a Resisting Middle East"

Ahmad Burghul, a commentator in government-owned Al-Thawra, said (8/7): "The new Middle East that Washington hopes for will not be a plan for promoting democracy and freedom, as some people imagine, but a plan for spreading destruction and chaos. It will not be a plan for promoting justice and returning usurped rights, but a plan for imposing Israeli hegemony and despotism on the peoples of the region....

"Despite Israeli massacres, the resistance will continue and the war in Lebanon will not end in favor of the Middle East that Washington wants, but in favor of a Middle East characterized by resistance, steadfastness, and victory."

Corbin